

## **25 Sept 02 Employee Information Exchange – Understanding Your Future**

### **25 Sept 02 0800 Session:**

Q1. If separated during the RIF, will Term employees be given the same number of days notice as Permanent employees?

**Answer:** Yes, term employees are entitled to the same notice period for RIF actions as career and career-conditional employees.

Q2 . When do I sign-up for the Priority Placement Program (PPP)?

**Answer.** PPP sign-up will occur a few days up to a week following issuance of RIF letters.

### **25 Sept 02 1300 Session:**

Q3. If an employee is forced into involuntarily retirement, are they eligible to sign-up for PPP?

**Answer.** Current employees who meet all eligibility for discontinued service retirement who file for discontinued service retirement (DSR) AFTER RECEIPT OF A SPECIFIC RIF SEPARATION NOTICE may register in PPP Program A. This includes employees eligible for optional retirement who elect to file for DSR. Employees who apply for optional retirement at any time or DSR prior to receipt of a specific RIF separation notice are NOT eligible to register in PPP Program A. Eligible employees remain registered until they are placed, decline a valid offer, or until 12 months after the effective date of separation from the permanent position.

Q4. Would a winning contractor require their trades employees to be journeymen?

**Answer.** Contractor personnel will be required to hold the appropriate and up-to-date certifications and licenses (such as journeymen and/or masters) that are required to perform the functions described in the PWS. Licenses and certifications will be renewed and updated as required by regulation and/or law; primarily Maryland State Law. The number of contractor staff requiring these and other certifications and licenses will vary with the nature and volume of work to be performed under this PWS. However, not all contractor employees will be journeymen. It is estimated that the State will require a minimum of one or two journeymen in each trade. Many employees working for the journeymen will not be required to have a journeyman's license.

Q5. Since many government employees are not certified Journeymen or Masters, will DIS tradesmen (i.e. plumbers, electricians) be able to get a job with a winning contractor?

**Answer.** Yes, DIS tradesmen should qualify under the CA or contract's "Right of First Refusal" clause. In similar CA studies, the contractors have filled many positions with displaced Federal employees.

Q6. How can DIS trades employees, with extended years of experience, obtain certifications and/or licenses to be prepared for positions outside the federal government? To obtain a certification or license, we have heard that the State of Maryland will not recognize Federal service as "qualifying experience", is this true and is there a way to get waivers in order to obtain certifications/licenses?

**Answer:**

**Electrician's License.** The State of Maryland will recognize Federal Government and/or Military service for meeting the years of experience requirement for licensure for the electrician trade (e.g. Journeyman, Master, etc). The State will also accept up to three years credit towards the experience requirement if the State Board determines that the applicant has completed a formal course of study or professional training in electrical installation comparable to the required experience. Having a certified Master certify the experience can be waived on a case-by-case basis. DCTEE may be able to help with registration and payment for the required training. A final examination is also required.

**Other Licenses (e.g. plumber, HVAC, etc).** For these licenses, the requirements are not similar to the electrician. For these trades and licenses, the DIS must have a Master in each trade who is State of Maryland qualified and who is willing to certify the Governmental experience. The State prefers to have a Master only certify experience for a small number of candidates (e.g. 8 or 9 would be too many). In some trades, they must be willing to certify that a candidate has been employed for a specific number of hours in the year prior to application. DCTEE may be able to help with registration and payment for the required training. A final examination is also required.

**Waivers.** We asked about waivers to the experience requirements; however, it is not possible to obtain waivers. Experience, training and testing requirements for all trades are listed below:

Electrician  
§ 6-304.

(a) To qualify for a State license, an applicant shall be an individual who meets the requirements of this section.

(b) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, the applicant shall have been engaged or employed regularly and principally in providing electrical services for all types of electrical equipment and apparatus for at least 7 years while under the direction and supervision of:

(i) a master electrician; or

(ii) a similarly qualified employee of a governmental unit.

(2) The State Board may allow an applicant up to 3 years of credit toward the experience required under paragraph (1) of this subsection, if the State Board determines that the applicant has completed a formal course of study or professional training in electrical installation comparable to the required experience.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, the applicant shall pass an examination given by the State Board under this subtitle.

(d) The State Board may investigate the qualifications of each applicant to determine whether the applicant meets the requirements of this section.

Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration

§ 9A-302.

(a) To qualify for an apprentice, journeyman, journeyman restricted, master, master restricted, or limited license, an applicant shall meet the requirements of this section.

(b) An applicant for a master heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration contractor license shall:

(1) have been regularly and principally employed in providing heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services under a journeyman, journeyman restricted, limited, or master restricted license for not less than 3 years of active experience under the direction and control of a master heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration contractor and have been so employed for not less than 1,875 hours in the year prior to application; and

(2) pass an examination administered by the Board.

(c) An applicant for a master restricted heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration contractor license shall:

(1) have been regularly and principally employed in providing refrigeration, air-conditioning, forced air heating, hydronic heating, or ventilation services under a journeyman, journeyman restricted, limited, or master restricted license for not less than 3 years of active experience under the direction and control of a master or master restricted heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration contractor and have been so employed for not less than 1,875 hours in the year prior to application; and

(2) pass an examination administered by the Board.

(d) An applicant for a limited heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration license shall:

(1) have been regularly and principally employed in providing forced air heating, hydronic heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services under a journeyman license for not less than 2 years of active experience under the direction and control of the holder of a master, master restricted, or limited license under this title, and have been so employed for not less than 1,000 hours in the year prior to application; and

(2) pass an examination administered by the Board.

(e) An applicant for a journeyman license shall:

(1) have held, for a period of at least 3 years, an apprentice license, and during that period shall have completed at least 1,875 hours of training in providing heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and refrigeration services under the direction and control of a licensed contractor; and

(2) pass an examination administered by the Board.

(f) An applicant for a journeyman restricted license shall:

(1) have held, for a period of at least 3 years, an apprentice license, and during that period shall have completed at least 1,875 hours of training in providing forced air heating, hydronic heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services under the direction and control of a licensed contractor; and

(2) pass an examination administered by the Board.

(g) (1) The Board may credit not more than 3 years of formal course of study or professional training in heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services if, in the opinion of the Board, the study or training provided comparable experience.

(2) The Board may credit not more than 6 years of work experience in heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services that fails to meet the requirements of subsection (b)(1), (c)(1), (d)(1), (e)(1), or (f)(1) of this section if, in the opinion of the Board:

(i) the work provided comparable experience; and

(ii) the failure of the applicant to meet the requirements is not attributable to fault or neglect on the part of the applicant.

(3) The Board shall credit not more than 3 years of work experience in heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services to any applicant under this section who has been teaching formal courses of study in heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, or refrigeration services for purposes of satisfying the requirements of subsections (b)(1), (c)(1), (d)(1), (e)(1), or (f)(1) of this section.

Plumbing

§ 12-302.

(a) In this section, "licensed master plumber" means an individual who holds:

(1) a master plumber license or a limited master plumber license issued by the Board;

(2) a master plumber license issued by the Baltimore County Plumbing Board;

(3) a master plumber license issued by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission; or

(4) a master plumber license issued by another state, if the individual became licensed in that state after passing an examination that is equivalent to the examination for a master plumber license given in this State.

(b) To qualify for a license, an applicant shall be an individual who meets the requirements of this section.

(c) (1) An applicant for a journey plumber license:

(i) 1. shall have held, for a period of at least 4 years, an apprentice plumber license or a license of equal stature, as determined by the Board, that is issued by another state; and

2. during that period, shall have completed at least 7,500 hours of training in providing plumbing services under the direction and control of a licensed master plumber; and

(ii) shall have completed at least 32 hours of training in the testing of backflow prevention devices, in a manner approved by the Board.

(2) The Board may allow the applicant to apply up to 1,500 hours of accredited, approved school study toward the experience requirement of paragraph (1)(i)2 of this subsection.

(d) An applicant for a master plumber license:

(1) shall have completed at least 3,750 hours of training in providing plumbing services as a journey plumber licensed in this State or another state and under the direction and control of a licensed master plumber;

(2) (i) if an applicant resides in this State, shall have a journey plumber license for at least 2 years; or

(ii) shall have been licensed in another state as a journey plumber after:

1. completing at least 7,500 hours of training in providing plumbing services under the direction and control of a licensed master plumber; and

2. passing a written examination that is equivalent to the examination for a journey plumber license given in this State; and

(3) shall have completed at least 32 hours of training in the testing of backflow prevention devices, in a manner approved by the Board.

(e) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, an applicant for a master plumber license or a journey plumber license shall pass an examination given by the Board under this subtitle.

(f) An applicant for a propane gas fitter certificate shall:

(1) hold a current certification of completion of the National Propane Gas Association Certified Training Program for Distribution Systems Operations;

(2) hold a gas fitters license from a county or municipal corporation authorizing the individual to provide propane gas services under a licensing program that is in existence prior to July 1, 1995 and that is acceptable to the Board; or

(3) otherwise demonstrate qualifications that are satisfactory to the Board and that are at least equivalent to the qualifications required by the National Propane Gas Association Certified Training Program for Distribution Systems Operations.

(g) (1) An applicant for a journeyman natural gas fitters license:

(i) shall have acquired 3,750 working hours as an apprentice natural gas fitter over a period of at least 2 years; and

(ii) shall have demonstrated successful completion of a training course approved by the Board relating to natural gas services.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, an applicant for a journeyman natural gas fitters license shall pass an examination given by the Board under this subtitle.

(h) An applicant for a master natural gas fitters license shall:

(1) hold a gas fitters license from a county or municipal corporation authorizing the individual to provide natural gas services under a licensing program that is in existence prior to July 1, 1999, is acceptable to the Board, and at a minimum requires:

(i) successful completion of the licensing examination with a passing score of no less than 70; and

(ii) 2 years of work experience as a journeyman natural gas fitter under the direction of a:

1. licensed master plumber; or
2. licensed master gas fitter;

(2) apply to the Board for a master natural gas fitters license before October 1, 2002 and provide proof that:

(i) the applicant has completed a natural gas certification program offered by a third party that:

1. was in existence prior to July 1, 1999;

2. is approved by the Board; and
3. provides theoretical and practical training relating to natural gas services; and

(ii) the applicant has acquired 4 years of work experience in providing natural gas services; or

(3) pass a written examination given by the Board and meet any other requirements specified by the Board, and at a minimum requires:

(i) proof of a current master or master restricted heating license in good standing issued by the State Board of Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning, and Refrigeration Contractors that is deemed acceptable by the Board; and

(ii) 2 years of work experience as a journeyman natural gas fitter under the direction of a:

1. licensed master plumber;
2. licensed master gas fitter; or
3. holder of a master or master restricted heating license in good standing issued by the State Board of Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning, and Refrigeration Contractors, who demonstrates qualification as a natural gas fitter that is deemed acceptable by the Board.

Q7. Since the retirement systems split many years ago, is there a timely and efficient mechanism to determine what OPM is showing for the total of my retirement contributions? It recently took me six months and three certified letters to get my account total.

**Answer.** Upon changing federal agencies, the former agency sends the work records to OPM for filing. This separates the employee from that agency.

To receive information on your retirement account, you can send a request to OPM. OPM will pull your record and send the amount of contributions and years of service information to your home of record. You can also request the periods of service without deductions. It may be beneficial to request a copy of any work records that are on file.

Each request should include the full name that you used while employed-including any previous last names, middle initials, date of birth, and social security number.

If you are a CSRS employee, you can send your request to:

CSRS Retirement Records  
OPM / CSRS  
P.O. Box 45  
Boyers, PA 16020

If you are a FERS employee, you can send your request to:

FERS Retirement Records  
OPM / FERS  
P.O. Box 200  
Boyers, PA 16020

You can also request this information by e-mail. The e-mail address for OPM is [retire@opm.gov](mailto:retire@opm.gov). The subject should read: request for retirement account total.

Q8. If a contractor wins the study, can affected employees sign-up for the Priority Placement Program (PPP) earlier than currently scheduled?

**Answer:** Yes. We recently learned that the MOCK RIF process will allow early registration into PPP. The North East Region Civilian Personnel Operations Center (NECPOC) at Aberdeen has agreed to conduct a MOCK RIF and can complete it on/about 31 Mar 03, assuming we have no further CA schedule slips. Early PPP registration would then start on/about 1 Apr 03 and would be voluntary. For those who elect this option, it will allow employees approximately 5½ months early registration onto PPP. The Final RIF would still occur as planned for 18 Sept 03 with another PPP registration opportunity (for those who did not elect early registration); this will start on/about 19 Sept 03.